

REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-20 are now present in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

Amendments have been made to claim 1, 2 and 12. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statements filed June 14, 2004, April 25, 2005 and February 10, 2006, and for providing Applicants with initialed copies of the PTO-1449 or PTO-SB08 forms filed therewith.

References Not Cited

The Examiner has applied Imamura et al. (US Patent 5,870,905) to reject the claims. However, Imamura et al. is not made of record on any PTO-892, PTO-1449 or PTO-SB08 form. The Examiner is requested to list the Imamura et al. reference on a PTO-892 in the next Office Action.

Drawings

Since no objection has been received, Applicant assume that the drawings are acceptable and that no further action is necessary. Confirmation thereof in the next Office Action is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103

Claims 1-4 and 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakane. Claims 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakane in view of Imamura et al. Claims 5, 12-14 and 16-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakane. Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakane in view of Erickson et al. These rejection are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of steps in a washing method of a drum washing machine including a falling washing step which is performed such that the laundry in a drum is washed by falling by gravity through continuous rotation of the drum if the amount of the laundry is smaller than a predetermined amount; and a reversing washing step which is performed such that the laundry is washed by rotating the drum forward or backward for a short predetermined time if the amount of the laundry is greater than or equal to a predetermined amount. Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of steps as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record.

Applicants respectfully submit in contrast to the present invention as claimed, Sakane merely discloses a drum washing machine comprising a drum and rotational speed control means which can control the speed and rotational direction of the drum. As shown in Fig. 3, the rotational speed control means increases the rpm of the drum from na to nb in the forward direction during a predetermined time period ta, and stops rotation of the drum during a predetermined time period tb, and increases the rpm of the drum from na to nb in a backward direction during a predetermined time period ta.

However, Sakane does not teach or suggest a washing method which can control the speed and rotational direction of the drum according to the amount of laundry in the drum. In particular, Sakane does not teach or suggest the washing method comprising: a falling washing step which is

performed such that the laundry in a drum is washed by falling by gravity through continuous rotation of the drum if the amount of the laundry is smaller than a predetermined amount; and a reversing washing step which is performed such that the laundry is washed by rotating the drum forward or backward for a short predetermined time if the amount of the laundry is greater than or equal to a predetermined amount.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of steps as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Sakane, for the reasons explained above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 by Sakane under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-20, Applicants submit that claims 2-20 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1 which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 2-20 are allowable based on their dependence from claim 1. In addition, the deficiencies of Sakane are not overcome by the inclusion of the secondary references to Imamura et al or Erickson et al. Accordingly, reconsideration of each of the rejections above, and allowance of claims 2-20, are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone James T. Eller, Jr., Registration No. 39,538, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

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Amendment dated June 5, 2007
Reply to Office Action of March 5, 2007

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: June 5, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By James T. Eller, Jr.

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